Distance
5.5kms

Time to complete
2–3 hours

Relative difficulty
Easy

Avenel Heritage and Nature Trail

Avenel

History of Avenel township

Avenel township was first established at Hughes Creek crossing on the Melbourne–Sydney Rd around 1838. With the discovery of gold to the north, traffic increased substantially. The township became a significant way point for travellers. The crossing was bridged and Cobb & Co coaches used the nearby Royal Mail Hotel (1847) as a staging post. This historic building is just one example of many you will visit on your walk.

Increasing passing traffic and an expanding primary industry soon attracted business and residents to the town. As a result, historic architecture is an enduring feature. Construction of the railway station (1872) created new opportunities 1.5km from the town origins. Along with other newcomers, Ned Kelly's family moved here in his youth.

This has been Taungurung country for thousands of years. Stewart Park provides an opportunity to connect with that past and to appreciate an environment of pristine waterways, bountiful bush and magnificent river red gum woodland.
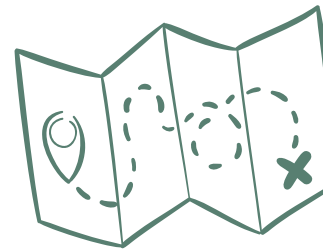

John (Red) Kelly 1821-1866

walking maps

Love Strath-bogie

Strathbogie shire

Location

Avenel is a rural township located 114km north of Melbourne on the Old Sydney Road, 1.5km west of Hume Freeway. Avenel Railway Station is on the Melbourne to Sydney line.

Track notes

This brochure describes an integrated trail. You can choose to walk it all, design your own or follow trail markers within it for shorter options. Comprehensive information signs are in place at numerous locations. You can pick any point at which to begin. Car parking is readily available throughout.

1.   For the full walk, a recommended starting point is near Hughes Creek crossing, where the town began. Park at the corner of Mitchell St and Scobie Street South. The trail of informative signs begins here, including maps and Ned Kelly Trail markers. Don't miss the sign 100m uphill, outside the the Royal Mail Hotel. Note, this is now a private residence.

2.   Pass under the Historic Hughes Creek Bridge (1859) into Stewart Park. Walk along a pretty creek side trail and through stands of glorious river red gums.

3.   Jubilee Park offers leafy shelter, public toilets, picnic tables, BBQs, playground, swimming pool, sports facilities and a Great War Memorial. Also, discover the historic court house (1876) and police residence (1870s)

4.   The town centre features the original Post Office (1880), General Store (1870s) and railway station (1872).

5.   Bank St features Harvest Home Hotel (1870), the Grain Store (1870), State Bank (1873), baker (1930s) and butcher (1950s) shopfronts and nineteenth century dwellings.

6.   Avenel Cemetery accommodates the graves of Ned Kelly's father "Red" (1876) and discoverer of Coolgardie gold, Arthur Bayley (1896).

7.   Avenel Primary School No. 8 (1874) (preceded by Avenel Common School 1856) and original Teacher's residence

8.   Hidden History site. Can you find the solitary grave of Morris Levy (1854), drowned in the creek below? What are the other two features (from 1924 and 1947)?

Return to Stewart Park via the entrance opposite the Avenel Pub. The picnic areas here include roofed interpretive signs with fascinating historic and environmental information. The images presented are worth a look in their own right.

Head toward the bridge again to pass under and return to your point of origin.